

GREENWorks

Ideas for a Cleaner Environment

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Renovating your home or business? Be lead-safe!

More than 10,530 school children in New Hampshire today have had or currently have lead poisoning. Lead poisoning decreases intelligence and increases behavioral problems and learning difficulties among school age children. More than one-third of children poisoned live in homes being renovated.

Accordingly, the US Environmental Protection Agency took bold steps recently by implementing the Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) regulation. The new rule requires all contractors (renovators, electricians, HVAC, plumbers, painters and maintenance staff) working on pre-1978 housing to be “Lead-Safe Certified.” This rule covers any building where children gather, such as schools and day care centers. This rule does not apply to homeowners doing the work themselves.

During the summer and fall we have the opportunity to take care of basic home repairs, both inside and out. But with almost 62 percent of New Hampshire’s homes built prior to 1978, it is inevitable that many of us will be putting our children at risk of lead poisoning with general home repairs. If you are working on your own pre-1978 home, take the time to understand how to incorporate lead-safe work practices into your routine. If you are hiring a contractor, be sure to ask if he/she is lead-safe certified. Always make sure the contractor is clear about what lead-safe methods will be used, how the work will be set up and performed, how the work site will be cleaned, and how the lead paint waste will be disposed of. For information about lead-safe work practices or finding a contractor who is lead-safe certified near you, visit www.epa.gov/getleadsafe or call 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

DES regulates the disposal of lead based paint waste described above. For households, lead-based paint waste, such as paint chips and dust should be placed in secure containers and taken to a household hazardous waste collection event. Lead-based paint wood or metal waste, such as door casings, old windows and doors, should also be stored in secure containers and transported to a permitted, lined solid waste landfill. Contact DES at (603) 271-2925 for locations of solid waste landfills that accept lead-based paint wastes.

Lead-based paint waste generated from public and commercial buildings is not excluded from the DES Hazardous Waste Rules, and requires laboratory testing to determine whether it should be considered a toxic hazardous waste, which would require alternative disposal options. For additional information, contact DES at (603) 271-2942.

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